

CONSIDERATIONS
TOVCHING
THE NEVV CON-
TRACT FOR
TOBACCO,

AS THE SAME HATH
beene propounded by Maister
DITCHFIELD, and other
vndertakers

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As the same hath been propounded
by Maister *Ditchfield*, and other
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IN all contracts, especially of so publique nature, there are two principall qualities thought most considerable, Iustice and Profit : For actions vniust want the blessing of God : and vnconcionable damage drawes on the complaints and murmures of men

The former Contract for *Tobacco*, hauing ben dissolved by the Lords, as not being beneficiall to the Plantations : it was hoped and expected that a new Contract to succcede in planting thereof, should haue reiected the former errors, and ben wholly bent to the comfort of the now languishing *Colonies* : But the same hauing ben taken into the carefull consideration of sundry persons, well willer to the plantations, and many factions now partially affected, who neither had any hand as furthering the former Contract; nor came with any preiudice against this latter when it was first broached. It hath appeared vnto the so full of all kinds of vniustice both to the Adventurers and planters, and so bent to the certaine and

suddaine ruine of the plantations, that they haue thought themselues bound both in dutie and conscience to deliuer these Reasons insuing against it.

The new Contract therefore, as it hath ben deliuered by parts in the meeting, wee conceiue to be these

1. That the *Tobacco* being henceforth to be made all in roule, two hundred thousand weight thereof shall be taken off by the Contractors and no more, at two shillings foure pence the best sort, and 16. pence the other: and one third to be payd for it in hand, the other two thirds at 6 and 6 Monthes.

2. That the King shall haue yearly 10000 pound certeine rent, and that 5000 pounds more shall be bestowed vpon the plantations

3. That for the third yeare, the Planter shall haue two shillings 4 pence, and three shillings if their be profite, & 250000. weight taken off; & the King shall haue 15000. pounds, & 5000. to the Plantation.

4. That all the *Tobacco* of the plantation shall be brought to the port of *London*, and if more doe come then 200000. the Contractors to take out of the whole what they will, & then to ship out the rest into *Turkey* & be bound not to bring it in againe, nor to sell it to any that are like to doe so.

Reasons against this Contract.

the whole what they will, and then we shall ship out the rest into *Turkey*, and be bound not to bring it in againe, nor to sell it to any that is like to doe so.

It seemeth very hard that these *Colonies* in this their Infancie, should haue worse conditions imposed vpon them for their Marchandize, then any other to our knowledge in the world, for their goods

goods being their owne, and they borne for subiects they shall be commaunded to bring all into this port of *London*, and yet not certaine to vent the one moytie of their Marchandize. For, the *Colonies*, if they stand and prosper, cannot make so little as 400000. weight a yeare; and these Contractors will take off onely 200000. Againe, for the particular Adventurers and Planters, there shall no man be certaine to haue any taken off, some onely the Contractors particular freinds; which the Contractors having libertie to choose & refuse what they list, there is an open gate for all parts of pattialitie in that kind. The Contractors and their freinds making great quantities. Then for those great quantities of *Tobacco* which shall be refused, what shall become of them? They must be sent into *Turkey*: new Marchants must be sought; disgraced were offered them; losse by long keeping and shrinking; double charge by new fraught, that the poore planter and Adventurer were much better to giue it away in the plantatioe, then here after so great charge to sell it for a little or nothing.

2 Touching the price of two shillings 4 pence for the best sort, and 16. pence for the rest: it is to be knowne and considered, that of long time by agreement betweene the Companies and Colonies, the *Tobacco* in *Virginia* it selfe, is valued at 3 shillings the pound, and in *Summer Islands* at 2 shillings sixe pence: which price they planters there refusing to abate, and the Adventurers and Marchants here not able to giue, hath occasioned the selling of wares vnto them at double and treeble their values, they ha-

ving their no money, but paying for all in *Tobacco*.
 See then in what state this contract doth place them.
 Their *Tobacco* must now be all made into roule, to
 the greater wast of the commoditie, and greater
 charge and labour of the planter and maker, whereas
 leafe *Tobacco* in Forraine parts doth sell much better,
 being made thus, it is all to be brought to the port of
London, and so into the custome house, where it must
 abide the Contractors pleasure and leasure, what &
 whose they will take, and what and whose they will
 leaue: the charge of fraught and shrinking, cannot
 be valued at lesse then 4 pence the pound: so the
 cleere price commeth of the best to 2 shillings and
 12. pence the rest. Now experience hath shewed,
 that in every yeares returnes of *Tobacco*, there hath
 been some few Countries that haue farre exceeded
 the rest in goodnes, these then must be taken for *To-*
baccoes of the best sort, and paid for at the best price,
 and all the rest being aboue 20. times as much in
 quantitie, and not attaining to the goodnes of the
 former, must necessarily in right and truth be made
Tobacco of the other sort, and consequently rated at
 the lower price, the Contracts stiffness refusing to
 haue more then two sorts. In conclusion the Adven-
 turer and planter, can by this contract expect little
 more then 12. pence the pound for his *Tobacco*. And
 this at the best hand, for so much as the contractors
 shall be pleased to take off: for, as for the remaines
 refused, which must goe into *Turkey*, if he gets 4. the
 pound, hee may thinke himselfe well dealt with by
 those that need to giue no maner then the list, And
 for this 12. pence: it shall be paid, one third part in
 hand,

hand, and the other two thirds, at 6 and 6 moneths. And this being the maine substance of this cōtract, it cannot but be apparent vnto all men of experience in the affaires of the plantations, that the Adventurers and Planters, shall not sell their *Tobacco* for one halfe of that which it standeth them in. For as for trusting to the hope of that clause in the Contract, that after two yeares, if their be profit, the price shall be raysed to 2. shillings and 3. shillings, that comfort is small, the time being long, the hope vncertaine; and even that price being too little to make them sauers. And thus much touching the particular estates of the Adventurers and planters wherein they are to be placed by this new contract.

3. But now thirdly to come to the generall Plantations themselues, and to enter into consideration, whether by vertue of this Contract they are likely to subsist and prosper: It is here first to be considered, that the plantations having been founded vnder his Maiesties gracious anity, at the excessiue great charges of the Adventurers and planters, and so continued for many yeares, with small or no retribution except to some few persons: and the attempts of setting vp Staple commodities, as Iron, Silke, wines &c. though persued with great constancie, care and charge, haue hetherto failed by sundry misaccidents. To thiuke the bestowing now of 5000. pounds a yeare vpon the plantations, and that drawne from the labours, and as it were, from the blood of the planters, will raise them vp from that great decay, into which during the space of those latter two years they haue apparently fallen; is like to proue a great
and

and dangerous error, whereas the only meanes remaining to advance the plantations, was the encouragement of the Adventurers thether, especially in person, with hope of wealth, good government and Iustice. Experience having shewed that after the publique stocke was vtterly exhaust, and the *Lottories ended*, yet the plantation in *Virginia* did exceedingly increase by the multitude of Families, and other particular persons, transported thether at their owne charge, vpon the aforesaid hopes and encouragements, till the fatall blow of the Massacrie given those a broad, and the great molestations and disheartnings of the company and Adventurers heere at home, cast the Collony into that consideration in which now it languisheth. But whensoever it shall please his gracious Maiestie, to reviuie and renewe the former hopes and encouragements, it will no doubt restore the former life to the plantation; the remaines whereof this contract must needes extinguish, which is thus to be demonstrated. The onely commoditie for Marchants in both the plantations: is at this day no other then *Tobacco*, whereby their apparell, tooles, implements, and all other necessities (except victuall) are procured, there are at this day in both the Colonies, at the least 3000. persons. This allowance of 200000. weight to both the Plantations, commeth but to 65. pound weight of *Tobacco* the person, which at 12. the pound weight, cometh to 3. pound 5. shillings, out of which all the planters in the *Sommer Islands*, and such as are Tenants, or Servants in *Virginia*, pay halfe to their owners, whether Land-lords or Masters: so that to them-

themselves their remaines for their maintenance, only 32 shillings 6 pence the peece. The charge of transporting a person to *Virginia*, cannot be lesse at this day then 20 pounds, which being a thing so generally knowne, must needs disharten all future planters from going, and force the present Adventurers rather to send for their seruants home, then to mainteyne them at a perpetuall charge without hope of profit. And this hath diuers of them already openly declared, we conclude therefore that to imagine, that the bestowing of 5000. pound a yeare vpon the Colonies, and that drawne from the hard labours of the poore planters themselves will uphold the plantations, when they shall find that they can be no longer masters of their owne goods, but must be forced to transport them, when they cannot vent them, to put them into their hands, who shall take and refuse what themselves please, and sell them before their faces, perhaps at a Noble a pound, and giue them but 6 pence after a yeares attendance for their goods, with the fraught and all other charges and losses: & this example also in *Tobacco* ingendring a feare of the like measure in all other commodities whensoever they should be raysed. That wee say as before in our vnderstanding to be a very great error, and of pernicious consequence to both the plantations. No lesse then to draw 40 ounces of blod from a tender weake Infant, and then to make him a restorative out of five ounces of the same blood.

4. Now in the last place, seeing this contract is so much magnified as tending to the great and certaine good of the plantations, wee will take a little

paines to make inquirie by way of reasons for whose benefite in truth, it hath been set on foote.

By force of this Contract, and by vertue of his Majesties Proclamation, getting into their hands the sole sale of all *Tobacco* to be expended either in this vertue, or the kingdome of *Ireland*. It is not to be thought but they will advance the price (after the nature of all Monopolies) at least to as high a rate as it hath borne in former times, that is to 8 or 9. shillings the pound; but admit they will begin first with a Noble a pound, two hundred thousand Nobles commeth vnto sixtie six thousand, six hundred sixtie six pounds 13 shillings 4. pence. His Majesties rent out of the plantations commeth vnto 15. thousand pounds: the planters and the Adventurers part after the rate of 18. pence the pound, which in probabilitie is like to be the highest medium commeth vnto 15000. pounds. So the charge in the whole comming vnto 30000 pound. There is 36000 pound, and one thousand markes remayning to themselves in way of retribution for their paines & adventure; and as themselves say to appease all such stormes as may arise. To great a proportion to be drawne from the plantations, to allow them scarce a sixt part of their owne, and to bestowe almost foure six parts vpon men no better deseruing. In the former Contract, what clamor and complaint against 25000. pounds to haue ben raised for Saleries, and all other charges, which came to little more then a pennie vpon the pound: Whereas these men professe that under 12 pence a pound gotten at least, they would not medle with it, and they hoped for farre

farre more. By computation of the former contract there was to come 60000 pounds at least, to the benefite of the plantations; whereof the 4 part is now is thought a sufficient portion, and yet that Contract was said to be pernicious to the Colonies, and this beneficiall. Indeed to doe equall right vnto both, the contract is better then the former, in that it excludeth all forraine *Tobacco* which with great violence was pressed vpon the former for the first two yeares; but this is to be attributed to his Majesties great grace, giving a favorable eare to the sute of the Commons in Parliament, as appeareth in his Majesties late proclamation. In the debating of the former Contract it was alleadged against it, by such as are now great furtherers of this, that though the planters *Tobacco* were sold at 5 shillings the pound yet by reason of his Maiesties third, they should be loosers; and now 16 pence a pound is thought price sufficient. This excessiue gaine of the contractors & vndertakers, we conceiue vndoubtedly to be a thing vniust, and tending to the immediate destruction of the plantations, for whatsoever they get the planter looseth, and where the planter looseth, the *Colony* is so much impouerished: For whatsoever the planter makes, that goes all backe to the plantation againe, and what the contractor gets, it remaineth with him to his owne enriching. For, as for the returning of 5000. pounds to the plantations which this heaue contract adnexed; It is in truth to send one hundred men thether, and to stay thousands from thence. The strenght and prosperitie of the Colony consisting in multitudes of people.

5. Some things we are forced to adde touching the proceeding of this Contract.

1. First, whereas the Adventurers of the *Sommer Islands* remaine still a Company, and are restrained by their Letters Pattents from ordering of matters of Trade but in a Quarter Court: This Contract hath been sought to have ben concluded, in a meane and extraordinary meeting, and no Court at all, when few were present, and those few mens silence also entred as a consent, not many of them vnderstanding it, and those that vnderstood it being amazed, at so great Iniustice.

2. Secondly, the *Virginia* Company being now discharged, it had been fit the Colony had been consulted about it; and not to dispose of other mens states and goods, without their consent and knowledge.

3. Thirdly, the very manner of treating of this Contract, hath bred a suspicion of very indirect proceedings: for first it hath been framed secretly and in the darke: it hath been published but by fragments, and some principall parts concealed. Some of the Commissioners appeare to be the cheife and principall Contracters: other some, though they do not appeare; yet they are partners with them in their Trading, are Contracters, which plainly shewes that they haue an interest in it. And so the same men are the Contriuers and makers of the bargain for themselves, and buyers and sellers, of one and the same wares; and take away and set the prizes of other mens goods, for their owne inordinate lucre.

4. Lastly, vnder pretence of doing althings orderly, they haue made a Committe of themselves, as in the behalfe of the Colonyes and planters, to Treat with their fellow Commissioners the Contractors for speedier payments.

And most of these men haue they chosen to be Committies whom the Adventurers and planters haue a long time complained off for their exorbitant wrongs to one or both the plantations.

Many other exceptions may be taken, but these shall suffice at this present.

FINIS.